

76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Agenda Item - 123

**Question of equitable representation on and increase
in the membership of the Security Council and
other matters related to the Security Council**

INDIA STATEMENT

By

**Ambassador R. Ravindra, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to United
Nations**

15 November 2021

(check against delivery)

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank you for convening today's plenary meeting on the critical subject of UN Security Council Reform. We welcome the vision outlined by you in your opening statement, and look to your "Presidency of Hope" to finally deliver concrete progress as we enter the 14th year of Intergovernmental Negotiations.

2. We also welcome your early appointment of the Co-Chairs, and extend felicitations to the Permanent Representative of Qatar, H.E. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, on her re-appointment as Co-chair, and welcome the Permanent Representative of Denmark, H. E. Martin Bille as Co-Chair. Please be assured of India's full support to this important process under your leadership.

3. My delegation aligns with the statements delivered earlier this morning by the distinguished Permanent Representatives of **Japan** on behalf of the **G-4**, and of **St. Vincent and Grenadines** on behalf of the **L.69** Group. We also extend our support to the statements delivered on behalf of the **African Group** and **CARICOM**.

4. We heard our leaders at the **General Debate** of the UNGA earlier this year highlight the urgency and importance of reforming global governance structures in order to make them fit for purpose for the needs of the 21st century.

5. Yet, in the over **four decades** that have gone by since the inscription of this item on the agenda of the GA, even as the geo-political landscape around us has transformed, the objections of the naysayers of reform remain frozen in time.

6. Inaction on our part is not without cost: the Security Council is being called upon to address increasingly complex issues of international peace and security. Yet, it finds itself unable to act effectively, for it is lacking **inclusivity** of those should be represented there, and therefore short of **legitimacy** and **credibility**.

Excellencies,

7. India's **substantive** position on the question of Security Council reform is well known. India is in favour of expansion of UN Security Council membership in **both the permanent and non-permanent categories**. This is a position that is clearly supported, on record, by the **majority** of Member States.

8. A larger permanent membership will ensure enhanced representation and say in decision making from the regions and members which are currently **not represented** or **under-represented** compared to their role and input so far. This would increase the legitimacy, effectiveness and responsiveness of the Council by ensuring that the decisions taken reflect the interest of the broad membership and thus will be better implemented.

9. Further, India fully supports the **Common African Position** as enshrined in the **Ezulwini** Consensus and the **Sirte** Declaration.

10. Coming now to the way forward in the **IGN process**, our simple appeal to you, Mr President, is to empower the Co-Chairs to finally enable a 'normal' UN process.

11. The IGN, so far, has been restricted to making repeated statements of known positions, without any effort to narrow differences. It is the only process of its kind in the UN where "negotiations" have been conducted in a multilateral setting without any text. While this may suit those who wish block progress, this goes against the basic tenets of multilateral diplomacy.

12. We are **open to suggestions** as to what could serve as the basis for our discussions. In our view, the the **updated Elements Paper** that was produced at the end of our discussions in the last IGN session could be a suitable **starting point**. It is of course by no means a perfect document - it needs more streamlining, and addition of attributed positions from various groups and Member States. It must also include a full reference

to the Common African Position - including the **Sirte** Declaration, which is missing from the text at present.

13. What we seek is a discussion format that breaks free from the cycle of cluster-based statements, and allows every stakeholder to contribute their positions and proposals to the text, which would be **updated to reflect them after each round** of discussions.

14 It is by no means our contention that simply having a **single negotiating document** will resolve the differences in substantive positions . But it also true that without such a text “on the screen”, as it were, to focus our discussions on, it is impossible for any us to demonstrate flexibility in reaching an outcome.

15. Additionally, this process must be a truly **inclusive** one. India has been consistent in calling for improvements to working methods of the IGN, through introduction of **official documentation** and **records**. This is particularly important to enable smaller delegations to effectively engage in this process.

Mr President,

16. The initiative and personal commitment we have heard from you is most appreciated, and gives us hope. In your success lies our collective endeavor. India stands ready to play a constructive role in promoting the common objective of a comprehensive and structured reform process.

Thank you
